travel in such planes/helicopters and the details thereof;

(d) whether any estimate has been prepared for non-officials visits made by the Defence Ministry in Army aircrafts/ helicopters;

(e) if so, who will pay them; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) to (f) The Defence Ministers uses Service aircraft in the discharge of his functions. Divulging the purpose of each journey, and other details would not be in public interest.

Secret plan of ULFA to Kill General Sawhney

1602. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any secret plan of the ULFA of Assam has been unearthed recently to kill General Sawhney;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to tighten security-nets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) and (b) It would not be in the public interest to disclose any details.

(c) The security forces are aware of the threat and have tightened security measures.

Moreover Govt. has taken various steps to bring the overall insurgency situation in Assam under control. These include inter-alia, deployment of Central Para-military force, Army and State Police for counter insurgency operations, declaration of ULFA, NDFB and NSCN (I) as unlawful associations under 'The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967'.Regular review of the situation both at State and Central lavel is also being made.

Review of VIP Security to Minimise Harassment to Common People

1603. SHRI JAYANT KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have undertaken a review of the VIP security in order to ensure that common people are spared of unwarranted harassment and minimum inconvenience is caused to them; and

(b) if so, the outcome of the review and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Govt. have recently considered the question of inconvenience which is caused to the general public during the movements of the VVIP's afresh. It has been decided to take certain measures in order to reduce such inconvenience in a manner that seurity requirements are not compromised. Necessary quidelines in this regard have been issued to the concerned authorities.

Proposal to Increase the Number of States and UTs.

1604. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to increase the present number of States and Union Territories;

(b) whether Government would take any decision this year; and

(c) if so, the names of the proposed State and if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) to (c) The Government is not contemplating any general reorganisation of States. The Government's policy is to advance the principles of political, administrative and economic federalism, as a consequence of which the benefits of development are expected to percolate down much faster to the hitherto under-

developed regions of the country where from the demands for Statehood are emanating.

Harassment to Scheduled Caste Officials

1605. SHRI RAMJI LAL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a number of representations from Welfare Organisations for the Welfare of Scheduled Caste Community regarding extreme harassment with their officials and their family members by the people belonging to martial casts with close affinity with local Police including an IPS officer in Rohtak district of Haryana;

(b) if so, whether Government have sought a detailed report in the matter from the State Government; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) to (c) Representations against individual grievances and harassments are received from time to time. These are forwarded to the State Governments concerned for appropriate action at their end as it is within the competence of State Govts. to take action in cases of harassment and redress grievances. The Central Government from time to time has, however, stressed upon the State Governments to take preventive and punitive measures to prevent atrocities against the weaker sections of the society.

Representations Against Forces

1606. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of representations made during 1995-96 and 1996-97 before the National and State Human Rights Commissions against the conduct of police, army and para-military forces;

(b) the number and nature of instances where the Human Rights Commissions have found substance in the representations; and

(c) in the light of these recommendations, the steps that have been taken or are under examination to ensure adequate compliance of the provisions of the United Nations Human Rights Charter on the part of law and order enforcing authorities in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) and (b) As against 2690 and 7522 representations against the conduct of the police, army and para-military forces, received by National Human Rights Commission, during 1995-96 and 1996-97, the number of cases where substance has been found in the representations are 1421 and 4306 respectively.

As of State Human Rights Commissions, it is reported that at the aggregate level, it received 347 and 774 complaints during the year 1995-96 and 1996-97 respectively. Except West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh other commissions were functional only in the year 1996-97. compalints received by the State Human Rights Commissions are still under scrutiny.

The nature of complaints mainly related to illegal detention, torture, false implication, custodial death/rape and missing of detenues.

(c) The Government of India attaches highest importance to the promotion and protection of human rights and have issued quidelines to the State Governments from time to time to ensure that Police behave in a humane manner during the discharge of their duties and the alleged cases of police excesses are taken serious note of and dealt with firmly wherever they occur. Towards this, the Government has advised the State Governments Army and also the Central Para Ministry Forces to sensitize its personnel in matters of human rights, during its operations in militayr affected areas. Human Rights as a subject has